

# Is Rest Rust to Your Body



**Know Your Joints**  
**Muscle and Joint Care**  
**Suggestions**

**SUMMARY:** In the past more often than not when you hurt your back you were told to rest in bed. Resting in general was a common suggestion in most cases of an injury. This may be true, but in many case of low back and other pain one of the best solutions is to move. Read on for more details.

In the past more often than not when you hurt your back you were told to rest in bed. Resting in general was a common suggestion in some cases of an injury. This may be true but in many case of low back pain and some other form of pain one of the best solutions is to move within tolerance. In very small doses, bed rest can give you a break when standing or sitting causes severe pain according to Harvard Health. Too much may make back pain worse. Staying in bed for any prolonged period can make you stiff and increase pain. When you don't move and bend, you lose muscle strength and flexibility. With bed rest, you lose about 1 percent of your muscle strength each day (wow), while you can lose 20 to 30 percent in a week (yikes). An extended period of bed rest isn't helpful for moderate back or muscle strain at any stage of therapy. While your back may feel a little better in the short term, too much time in bed can trigger other problems. Besides your muscles losing conditioning you may develop digestive issues such as constipation, and there is some risk of developing blood clots in the veins of your pelvis and legs. More importantly to me is being on prolonged bed rest does nothing for your mental health and sense of well-being. Depression, as well as an increased sense of physical weakness and malaise, is common among people confined to bed.

## **How prolonged bed rest may worsen your back pain**

### **Deconditioning of muscles**

Muscles get weaker that support spinal structure

### **Changes in disc size**

When you lie down, the size of your intervertebral disc increases due to swelling by absorption of fluids. The risk of injury, such as herniation is high during this period, especially during bending movements.

### **Alteration in spinal biomechanics**

Prolonged periods of lying down alter the normal lordotic (reverse-C shape) curve of your lower spine and makes it more flat, altering the normal mechanics of your spine.

### **Higher risk of injury**

The above changes can make your back weak and worsen your pain.

Additionally, these changes pose a higher risk of injury due to spinal instability and insufficient load-bearing capacity of the spine. FROM SPINE HEALTH